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Science and Weapons Daily Review

2 June 1983

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[Redacted]

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CONTENTS

2 JUNE 1983

2

SOUTH AFRICA: SOVIET PROPAGANDA EFFORTS

The recent article in Pravda falsely claims the United States is helping the South African Government to develop an "ethnic chemical weapon."

2 JUNE 1983
SW SWDR 83-203J

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SOUTH AFRICA: SOVIET PROPAGANDA EFFORTS [REDACTED]

An article in the Soviet news service Pravda claims the United States is helping the South African Government develop chemical weapons. According to the article, research on weaponizing binary nerve agents is being conducted at a medical institute near Pretoria. Another reported research station, located near Luis Trichard in Transvaal Province, is working on an "ethnic chemical weapon." This research supposedly was based on natural genetic distinctions among races. The article refers to press releases concerning attacks by the South Africans in November and December 1981 in which chemical weapons caused one death and paralyzed 10. [REDACTED]

Comment:

We know of no chemical-warfare attacks involving toxic agents in South Africa. What the Soviets are calling chemical attacks might have been the use of a riot-control gas to disperse crowds. We also do not believe the South Africans are producing chemical lethal agents. [REDACTED]

Pravda's chemical-warfare charges have no basis and appear to be a diversionary tactic. Continuing adverse publicity on the use of toxic chemicals by the Soviet Union and its surrogates in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan apparently has precipitated the Soviet propaganda attack on the United States. The Soviets may hope the emotional reactions brought about by this anti-US propaganda, especially the anticipated response to an ethnic chemical-weapon, will focus attention away from Soviet chemical warfare activities. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]